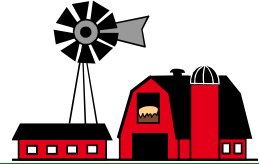




**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS**  
**Agricultural Lands Preservation Commission**  
c/o Department of Environmental Management  
235 Promenade Street  
Providence, RI 02908



**AGRICULTURAL LANDS PRESERVATION COMMISSION (ALPC)**  
**MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 21, 2014 MEETING**  
**Approved**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** George Mason, Ken Ayars, Kevin Nelson, Martha Neale, Everett Stuart, Jon Reiner, Fay Strongin

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Will Wright, David Wallace

**GUESTS:** Richard Schartner, Schartner Farms

**STAFF:** Lauren Farley – DEM, Mike Kenyon – USDA / NRCS

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm at USDA, 60 Quaker Lane, Warwick, RI by G. Mason, Chair. New members Jon Reiner and Fay Strongin were welcomed.

On a motion by E. Stuart and a second by K. Nelson, the Commission voted unanimously to accept the minutes of the May 15, 2014 meeting.

**ALPC Budget**

L. Farley gave an update on the ALPC budget. The current balance with the July 2014 bond apportionment (\$1.5 million) and current project and overhead commitments included is \$892,500. Another \$1.5 million apportionment is due July 1, 2015. Current project commitments are \$150,000 to Rippin in N. Kingstown, \$192,500 to Lial in Warren, \$255,000 to Bettencourt in Tiverton, \$550,000 to Bailey, \$185,000 to Regnier/Fletcher Road, and \$200,000 to Whaley Farm in South Kingstown. Current overhead commitments (appraisals and survey) total \$95,000.

**Bond**

L. Farley provided information on Question 7 which will be on the November 4, 2014 ballot. The Clean Water, Open Space and Healthy Communities Bond for \$53 million include \$3 million for Farmland Acquisition. This includes funding for a new program which will allow the State to purchase farmland, restrict its use, then sell the land back on the private market for use as farmland. The mechanisms for how the funds will be spent and the rules for the purchase and sale of property were discussed.

**Status of Farms in Negotiation**

M. Kenyon provided an update on the status of projects with NRCS funding:

Lial, Tiverton – The Deed to Development Rights will need to be re-reviewed after the title commitment is updated. NRCS technical review of the appraisal and AAI database search need to be completed.

Bettencourt, Tiverton – Wetland issue has parcel ineligible at this time.

Rippin, North Kingstown – Project led by the town. The Deed to Development Rights will need to be re-reviewed after the title commitment is updated. NRCS technical review of the appraisal and AAI database search need to be completed. Conservation plan is being developed to address Highly Erodible Land. Forest Management Plan is being developed.

St. Mary's, Portsmouth - FY 2011 Parcel with Aquidneck Land Trust. Originally two parcels – One will be moving forward with anticipated closing in CY2014. Appraisals need to be redone – Appraiser did not meet required NRCS qualifications. The Deed to Development Rights will need to be re-reviewed after the title commitment is updated. NRCS technical review of the appraisal and AAI database search need to be completed.

Regnier (Fletcher Road), North Kingstown – FY2014 Application from town. Application is being reviewed by NRCS National Office.

L. Farley provided updates on other projects with ALPC Commitments. Whaley, South Kingstown is being led by the South Kingstown Land Trust and is currently stalled. Andrews, Exeter is in family negotiations. Cotta, Portsmouth was appraised lower than farmer expected and discussions about moving forward continue.

**Agricultural Lands Easement Program (ALE) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) (Formerly Federal Farm and Ranchland Protection Program – FRPP)**

M. Kenyon provided an update regarding the program. NRCS National Easement Staff conducted an onsite inventory of closed and current projects. Report of the findings will be presented in September to RI-NRCS. RI-NRCS received one ACEP-ALE application for FY 2014. There will be no more grant rounds again this year – only one ranking period. FY 2014 ACEP-ALE and prior year funding were received. G. Mason brought to the attention of and it was acknowledged by M. Kenyon that the NRCS administered ACEP-ALE program has become increasingly challenging for entities to apply. The rules and funding requirements have become prohibitively complicated.

K. Ayars inquired about RI becoming a “certified entity”. M. Kenyon reported there is only one certified entity in the country, Virginia. Becoming a certified entity would provide the state more freedom and a lump sum to spend. The process for becoming certified is complex – the reason why only VA has designation.

K. Ayers asked if impervious surface rules have changed from previous years' FRPP rules. M. Kenyon reported parcels should have no more than 2% impervious surface but in certain instances a waiver for up to 10% may be made.

### **ALPC Membership**

J. Reiner, Town Planner for North Kingstown will be leaving his current position for a new post in Groton, CT. Commission members and J. Reiner expressed interest in him continuing to be on ALPC. He and F. Strongin, an urban farmer in Providence, were both approved by the Senate for Commission membership.

### **ALPC Signature Authority as entity for NRCS documents**

NRCS requested documentation as to whom has signature authority for the entity (ALPC) on NRCS agreements and documents. On a motion by G. Mason and a second by M. Neale, the Commission decided that the designated signatory for ALPC is the Chairperson. In his / her absence the Vice-Chair may sign.

### **Announcements/Additional Business**

K. Nelson presented to the Commission a sign that could be placed on ALPC farms that identifies them as protected farms with funding from ALPC. Commission members expressed interest in working with DEM staff to pursue funding and implementation strategies and potentially having partner funders on signs. This would be voluntary for the farmers.

Guest, R. Schartner asked ALPC if his application to sell development rights on corner parcel (Rt.2 and Rt. 102 Exeter / N. Kingstown) is still valid. Commissioned informed him that it had scored into ALPC program and is still eligible. R. Schartner informed the Commission of his intent to move forward with selling Exeter parcel for development and zoning changes are in the works. K. Ayars said state funds alone with cash on hand would not be enough to purchase development rights but the potential for a coalition is fair and will be explored. J. Reiner expressed there is development pressure at the site.

There being no further business, on a motion by F. Strongin and a second by J. Regnier, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 6:15.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Farley  
Division of Planning and Development  
RIDEM